

“The Weather-Ready Nation Charge”
Opening Remarks at
Severe Weather Symposium
NOAA National Weather Center, Norman OK
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Dr. Jane Lubchenco
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans & Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator
As Delivered via VTC

Thank you, Dr. [Berrien] Moore.

I regret not being able to attend this symposium in person. But I want to express my full support for this symposium and thank everyone who helped make this symposium a reality. And thank you to all the agencies and organizations involved in putting this together and bringing our distinct missions to the table with a unified effort to listen and learn to help the American people.

I hope this symposium generates sustained interactions moving beyond Norman this week, and I look forward to engaging further with all of you.

You will hear a lot about Weather-Ready Nation this week, and if there is one word to describe Weather-Ready Nation, I would say it is a mindset.

This is a national mindset. From our scientists across multiple disciplines to the emergency management community, to our public leaders, businesses and communities, all the way down to individuals - all of us must work together toward improving preparedness and building resiliency against extreme events.

This requires government, industry, and academia to work openly, collaboratively, and with the highest integrity.

We are all in this together.

I have seen the list of attendees, and I applaud the diverse backgrounds of all of you participating this week.

The success of NOAA's mission should not just be measured by the accuracy of its information, but by the effectiveness of its application.

Improving effective response to forecasts and warnings will require Emergency managers, businesses, and citizens understanding the value of the services provided and using that information to make informed decisions. It will also require social science research to discover

how best to deliver timely, useable, and credible information.

Do people hear and understand the information we think we're providing? And do they respond in ways that protect themselves and their property, whenever possible?

The answer, of course, is that we all can do a better job, and coming together like this is a good first step.

NOAA is not just looking inward on how to do a better job, but also outward. NOAA is here to listen to and respond to the needs of our partners, users, and the American people.

This requires commitment from all parts of NOAA:

- The National Weather Service delivering forecasts, warnings, and decision support.
- State-of-the-Science Research at our national labs advancing radar technology such as Dual Polarization, high resolution modeling, and intuitive product displays.
- Improving our satellite observation systems – NPP was just launched in October and is proceeding with validation and calibration, and we have GOES-R on the horizon.
- Even the National Ocean Service was instrumental, providing aerial imagery of the spring floods and tornado paths.
- But Weather-Ready Nation can only reverberate across our nation if all of us believe, act, and spread consistent messages together.

Imagine a nation where businesses, communities, and families all have preparedness and resiliency on their conscious.

- Families with emergency preparedness plans...
- City planners and developers building safe rooms and community storm shelters...
- Businesses able to recover faster with the ability to provide essential services...

Severe weather threats can no longer be looked at as inconveniences, or viewed fatalistically. Victims don't have to be caught "in the wrong place at the wrong time".

This symposium will set the stage on how we can collectively have better outcomes than the ones we saw this year.

We will all remember 2011 as the "year of extreme weather".

I sincerely wish I could be there in person, meeting all of you, and sharing similar experiences with Governor Fallin.

For those of us who have seen the devastation with our own eyes, images of tragedy and survival, utter devastation and miraculous stories of preservation, will forever stay with us.

But let's also remember 2011 as the year we all came together to strengthen our commitment to making America "Weather Ready".

